

CLAIMS

What is claimed as being new and desired to be protected by LETTERS PATENT of the United States is as follows

1. (Canceled) A key label comprising:
a substantially cylindrical sleeve having an inner surface and an outer surface and a circumference and formed of a colored heat shrink material, the inner surface of the substantially cylindrical sleeve having a through opening adapted to slip over a key head such that it fits around a head end of a key and the substantially cylindrical sleeve to be heat shrunk to substantially encase the head end of the key forming a flat surface that can be written upon, the length of the sleeve being less than one half of the circumference of the sleeve.

2. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein when the substantially cylindrical sleeve is shrunk to fit around the head end of the key upon being heated to a predetermined temperature, the inner surface of the substantially cylindrical sleeve at least partially contacting a portion of the head end of the key after shrinking, forming a flat surface that can be written upon, the length of the sleeve being 1/8 inch and 1 inch.

3. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the outer surface of the substantially cylindrical sleeve provides a flat writeable surface for application of an identifying mark to be applied.

4. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the substantially cylindrical sleeve,

when shrunk covers only the head end of the key.

5. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the heat shrink material comprises one of polyolefin, polyvinyl chloride, polytetrafluoroethylene (Teflon), and ~~or~~ polychloroprene (Neoprene) ~~or the like~~.

6. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the substantially cylindrical sleeve is preprinted with identifying information.

7. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the substantially cylindrical sleeve is at least partially transparent.

8. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the substantially cylindrical sleeve is attached to a key by applying heat to the substantially cylindrical sleeve.

9. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the substantially cylindrical sleeve is to be shrunk by application of heat from a heat source, the heat source comprises one of a gas flame, an electric heating element, an infrared heat source, a heated fluid, a solid fuel or like heating source.

10. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the sleeve of heat shrink material is preformed to conform to a body of a lock.

11. (Canceled) The key label of claim 1, wherein the sleeve of heat shrink material is preformed to conform to a shackle of a lock.

12. (Canceled) A method of manufacturing a colored heat shrink label for application to a key head, the method comprising:

providing a colored heat shrink material having a substantially cylindrical shape with a predetermined diameter and circumference and length; and

cutting the substantially cylindrically shaped colored heat shrink material into sleeves of a predetermined width, the length of the sleeve being less than one half of the circumference of the sleeve, each sleeve having an opening therethrough, applying one of the sleeves over a key head and heat shrinking the sleeve to the key head.

13. (Canceled) The method of manufacturing of claim 12, further comprising at least partially preshrinking the heat shrink material prior to affixation to the key head.

14. (Canceled) The method of manufacturing of claim 13, further comprising pre-forming at least one of the substantially cylindrically shaped heat shrink material sleeves to partially conform to a known shape of a key head to which the at least one section is to be affixed.

15. (Canceled) The method of manufacturing of claim 13, wherein the sleeve is pre-formed to conform to the shape of the head portion of a key.

16. (Previously Amended) A labeling system comprising:
a key label including a first substantially cylindrical sleeve of a colored heat shrink material having a first predetermined diameter, a first predetermined length, and a first circumference, an inner surface and an outer surface, such that the inner surface of the key label is adapted to fit around a head end of a key and be shrunk to substantially encase the head end of the key forming a flat surface that can be written upon, the first substantially cylindrical sleeve having a through opening to fit around the head end of the key and be shrunk to substantially encase the head end of the key, the length of the material being less than one half of the first circumference of the material, the first length being between about 1/8 inch and 1 inch; and

a lock label including a second substantially cylindrical sleeve of a colored heat shrink material having a second predetermined diameter, a second predetermined length, an inner surface and an outer surface and a through opening such that the inner surface of the lock label is adapted to fit around a portion of a lock and be shrunk to substantially encase the portion of the lock forming a flat surface that can be written upon;

the key label and the lock label being color coded adapted to indicate that the key and the lock are associated with each other.

17. (Canceled) The labeling system of claim 16 wherein the second substantially cylindrical sleeve is formed to fit around a body portion of the lock.

18. (Canceled) The labeling system of claim 16 wherein the second substantially cylindrical sleeve is formed to fit around a shackle portion of the lock.

19. (Canceled) A key label comprising:

means for substantially encasing a head end of means for opening, said substantially encasing means including a substantially cylindrical sleeve having an inner surface and an outer surface and formed of a heat shrink material, the inner surface of the substantially cylindrical sleeve having a through opening adapted to slip over a head end of the opening means to be heat shrunk to substantially encase the head end of the opening means.

20. (Canceled) The key label of claim 19, wherein when the substantially cylindrical sleeve is shrunk to fit around the head end of the opening means upon being heated to a predetermined temperature, the inner surface of the substantially cylindrical sleeve at least partially contacting a portion of the head end of the opening means after shrinking.

21. (Canceled) The key label of claim 19, wherein the outer surface of the substantially cylindrical sleeve provides a writeable surface for application of an identifying mark to be applied.

22. (Canceled) The key label of claim 19, wherein the substantially cylindrical sleeve, when shrunk covers only the head end of the opening means.

23. (Canceled) The key label of claim 19, wherein the heat shrink material comprises: one of polyolefin, polyvinyl chloride, polytetrafluoroethylene (Teflon), or polychloroprene (Neoprene) or the like.

24. (Canceled) The key label of claim 19, wherein the opening means comprises a key

25. (Canceled) A labeling system comprising:

means for labeling a key including a first substantially cylindrical sleeve of a heat shrink material having a first predetermined diameter, a first predetermined length, an inner surface and an outer surface, such that the inner surface of the key label means is adapted to fit around a head end of a key and be shrunk to substantially encase the head end of the key, the first substantially cylindrical sleeve having a through opening to fit around the head end of the key and be shrunk to substantially encase the head end of the key; and

means for labeling a lock including a second substantially cylindrical sleeve of a heat shrink material having a second predetermined diameter, a second predetermined length, an inner surface and an outer surface and a through opening such that the inner surface of the lock label means is adapted to fit around a portion of a lock and be shrunk to substantially encase the portion of the lock;

the key label means and the lock label means being adapted to indicate that the key and the lock are associated with each other.

26. (Canceled) The labeling system of claim 25 wherein the second substantially cylindrical sleeve is formed to fit around a body portion of the lock

27. (Canceled) The labeling system of claim 25 wherein the second substantially cylindrical sleeve is formed to fit around a shackle portion of the lock.